

TITLE IX TOOLKIT

TAKE ACTION!

Title IX & Trauma Informed Services for Students

In middle and high schools across the country, too many girls who are survivors of sexual assault are being routinely denied an equal education opportunity. They are penalized for trauma-induced behavior instead of being recognized as survivors of trauma and receiving the wraparound trauma-informed services that they need.

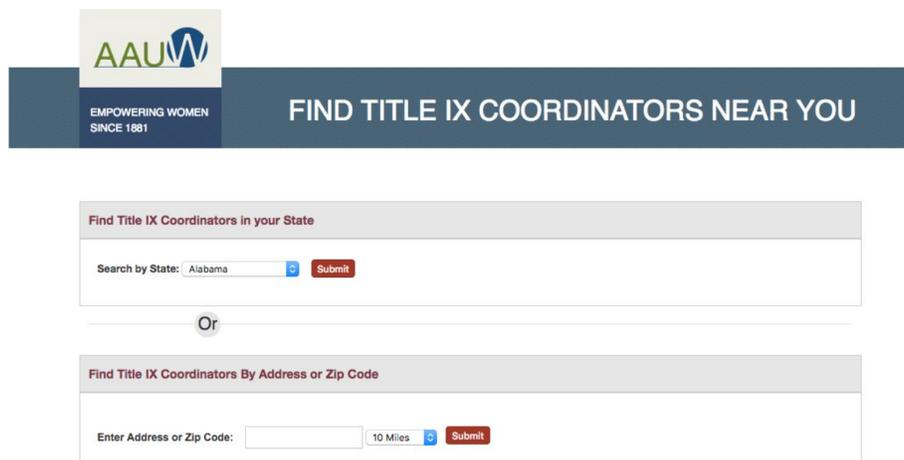
As a NOW activist, you can work with your local school district and the Title IX Coordinator(s) to address this injustice. Below you will find some guidance on how to get started!

STEP 1: DISCUSS WITH YOUR NOW CHAPTER

Bring this issue to your local NOW Chapter. Together, you can plan your Title IX and school district outreach.

STEP 2: LOCATE YOUR DISTRICT TITLE IX COORDINATOR

Luckily, our friends at the American Association for University Women (AAUW)--who have been actively reaching out to Title IX Coordinators--have an incredible online tool designed to locate a coordinator near you! [Click HERE to access!](#)



The screenshot shows the AAUW logo and the text "EMPOWERING WOMEN SINCE 1861" on the left, and "FIND TITLE IX COORDINATORS NEAR YOU" on the right. Below this is a search interface with two options: "Find Title IX Coordinators in your State" and "Find Title IX Coordinators By Address or Zip Code". The first option has a dropdown menu for "Search by State:" with "Alabama" selected and a "Submit" button. The second option has a text input for "Enter Address or Zip Code:", a "10 Miles" distance selector, and a "Submit" button.

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STEP 3: SET UP A MEETING

You can now either send the located coordinator(s) an email or call to schedule a meeting!



STEP 4: PLAN YOUR OUTREACH!

There are many resources that could be useful to you and your Chapter as you plan your meeting with the school staff and coordinators.

The NOW National Action Campaigns Title IX Information Brief

- Outlines how Title IX is relevant and must be enforced in the context of girls' experiences of trauma and their access to an education. This can also be left behind with the coordinator at the end of your meeting. [Click HERE to access!](#)

The NOW National Action Campaigns ECT Background and Resources

- Provides further resources and context to take action on the campaign! [Click HERE to access!](#)

STEP 5: FOLLOW UP!

Once you've met with the Title IX coordinator, maintain the relationship. Get them involved and use them as a resource as much as you can. However, if you find that a school is not in compliance with Title IX (for example: if they receive federal funding and do not have a Title IX Coordinator), you can take action by filing a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

Other Follow Up Options

- You could write a letter to the editor or put out a press release to let your community know how you and your Chapter are working to ensure that local students' rights are fully protected under Title IX.
- Let us know how it went! What worked, what didn't work? What advice would you give other activists? Send us an email at now@now.org with "National Action Program re: Title IX Coordinator Outreach" in the subject line.

TITLE IX

Trauma Informed Services for Middle and High School Students

What is Title IX?

Title IX is a section of the Education Amendments of 1972 that requires equal education opportunities for girls in federally funded educational programs. The purpose of Title IX is to circumvent the perpetuation of society's gender discrimination in academic settings; ideally, it should operate as a force to rebalance the scales of justice. While Title IX is traditionally thought of as a method to provide young women equal opportunities in sports, the amendment extends to 10 key areas: Access to Higher Education, Career Education, Education for Pregnant and Parenting Students, Employment, Learning Environment, Math and Science, Sexual Harassment, Standardized Testing, and Technology.

In recent years, Title IX legislation has been used to address the crisis of sexual harassment and sexual assault on college campuses. Title IX has become particularly integral in holding universities and schools accountable for sexual assaults that are overlooked or ignored by the administration and campus police. By June 15, 2016, there were 246 federal Title IX investigations against college universities, alone.

Title IX & Vulnerable Girls

Title IX's promise of equal education opportunity is important for middle and high school girls who have experienced sexual trauma as well. Girls are sexually abused at a rate 4.4 times higher than boys and their behavioral reaction to trauma is often criminalized. According to the Sex Abuse to Prison Pipeline Report, traumatic experiences are frequently the cause for youth involvement in the criminal justice system, with 31% of girls having been victims of sexual violence, 41% being physically abused, and 84% experiencing family violence.

In schools, zero-tolerance policies prioritize discipline over educational attainment; this disproportionately affects students of color. For example, Black girls are almost six times more likely to be suspended than White girls and three times more likely to be suspended than Black boys for the same behavior. LGBTQIA+ youth are also disproportionately affected. Students suspended or expelled are in turn three times more likely to be drawn into the juvenile justice system the following year.

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If a student is engaged in rule infractions or otherwise disruptive behaviors that are a result of trauma, that student is in need of the appropriate trauma-related services, not disciplinary action. The rights of girls are further violated when they are punished, pushed out, or criminalized instead of recognized as survivors of trauma and provided services such as emotional counseling and health assistance. Girls who experience sexual or physical abuse are entitled to an equal education and when their trauma, assault, and abuse is not recognized, they are deprived of that right.

All federally funded school districts are required to have a certified Title IX Coordinator who has been properly trained to handle cases of sexual violence. The Campus Save Act, as well as the Title IX Guidance, stress that training should include guidance on how to deal with cases of sexual violence as well as how to identify them.

In middle and high schools too many girls who are survivors of sex assault are being routinely denied an equal education opportunity. They are penalized for their trauma-induced behavior instead of receiving wraparound trauma-informed services. Schools must work with their Title IX Coordinators and other faculty to rectify this injustice.

NOW's Action Agenda

As activists you can lobby your school district to:

- Install a properly trained Title IX Coordinator, who can not only handle cases of sexual abuse but also knows how to identify it.
- Provide trainings for faculty and staff so that they too, can recognize signs of trauma that may be an underlying cause for “defiant” behavior in certain students, and learn how to address that trauma without further victimizing the student or depriving them of their education.
- Develop protocols and provide/make referrals to services for sexually traumatized students to ensure equal education opportunities for survivors, allowing them to stay in school and recover from trauma.
- Replace law enforcement in schools, often in the form of Student Resource Officers or SROs, who have been known to increase youth involvement in the juvenile justice system, with guidance and mental health counselors.

Sources

- 1 Lhamon, Catherine E. "Questions and answers on Title IX and sexual violence." Washington, DC. (2014)
- 2 Kingkade, T., & Post, H. (2016, June 26). List of 195 higher Ed institutions under title IX sexual violence. Retrieved March 2, 2017.
- 3 Saar, Malika Saada, et al. "The sexual abuse to prison pipeline: The girls' story." (2015).
- 4 Morris, Monique W. "Race, Gender, and the" School to Prison Pipeline": Expanding Our Discussion to Include Black Girls." (2012).
- 5 Ali, R. (2010). Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying. US Department of Education.
- 6 KnowYourIX. Supporting A High School Student Survivor. Retrieved March 2, 2017, from Know Your IX.
- 7 Onyeka-Crawford, Adaku, et al. "Let Her Learn." (2017).